
PART I - ADMINISTRATIVE

Section 1. General administrative information

Title of project

Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Umbrella Project

BPA project number: 20509

Contract renewal date (mm/yyyy): 10/2000 ☒ **Multiple actions?**

Business name of agency, institution or organization requesting funding

Colville Confederated Tribes, Fish & Wildlife Department

Business acronym (if appropriate) CCT-FWD

Proposal contact person or principal investigator:

Name Steven L. Judd

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NPPC Program Measure Number(s) which this project addresses

Section 11

FWS/NMFS Biological Opinion Number(s) which this project addresses

N/A

Other planning document references

N/A

Short description

Umbrella project to protect, mitigate, enhance and evaluate wildlife habitats and species for partial mitigation for losses to wildlife resulting from Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dams.

Target species

Mule deer, sharp-tailed and blue grouse, mourning dove, Lewis and downy woodpecker, yellow warbler, bobcat, mink, bald eagle, and spotted sandpiper.

Section 2. Sorting and evaluation

Subbasin
Upper Columbia

Evaluation Process Sort

| CBFWA caucus | Special evaluation process | ISRP project type |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mark one or more caucus | If your project fits either of these processes, mark one or both | Mark one or more categories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anadromous fish <input type="checkbox"/> Resident fish <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi-year (milestone-based evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed project evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> Watershed councils/model watersheds <input type="checkbox"/> Information dissemination <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operation & maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> New construction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research & monitoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implementation & management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife habitat acquisitions |

Section 3. Relationships to other Bonneville projects

Umbrella / sub-proposal relationships. List umbrella project first.

| Project # | Project title/description |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20509 | Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Umbrella Project |
| 9204800 | Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Operation and Maintenance Project |
| 9506700 | CCT Performance Contract for Continuing Acquisition |
| | |

Other dependent or critically-related projects

| Project # | Project title/description | Nature of relationship |
|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 0 | N/A | N/A |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Section 4. Objectives, tasks and schedules

Past accomplishments

| Year | Accomplishment | Met biological objectives? |
|------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1993 | Acquired W.K. property-4814 ac. | Yes |
| 1995 | Acquired H.K. property-4800 ac. | Yes |
| 1995 | Acquired Berg property-6300 ac. | Yes |

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1997 | Acquired Nespelem Bend property-517 ac. | Yes |
| 1997 | Acquired Redford Canyon property-221 ac. | Yes |
| 1998 | Acquired Friedlander property-60 ac. | Yes |
| 1998 | Acquired Hinman property-770 ac. | Yes |
| 1998 | Acquired Sand Hills property-1030 ac. | Yes |
| 1998 | Conducted baseline HEP's (1993-1998) on acquisitions | Yes, partial |
| 1998 | Implemented O & M on acquisitions (1993-1998) | Yes, partial |
| 1998 | Implemented M & E on acquisitions (1993-1998) | Yes, partial |

Objectives and tasks

| Obj 1,2,3 | Objective | Task a,b,c | Task |
|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Acquire Property | a | Negotiate transactions |
| | | b | Amend to CCT-BPA agreement |
| 2 | Do baseline HEP | a | Conduct HEP |
| | | b | Analyze data |
| | | c | Produce HEP report |
| 3 | O & M (short term) | a | Secure property |
| | | b | Maintain boundary fences |
| | | c | Remove trespass livestock |
| | | d | Noxious weed control |
| 4 | Develop site plans | a | Collect data |
| | | b | Analyze data |
| | | c | Produce site plans |
| 5 | O & M (long term) | a | Implement O&M based on Obj. 4 |
| 6 | Enhancements | a | Implement based on Obj. 4 |
| 7 | M & E | a | Implement based on Obj. 4 |
| | | | |

Objective schedules and costs

| Obj # | Start date mm/yyyy | End date mm/yyyy | Measureable biological objective(s) | Milestone | FY2000 Cost % |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 10/1999 | 9/2000 | | | 97.00% |
| 2 | 10/2001 | 12/2002 | | | 1.00% |
| 3 | 1/2001 | 9/2001 | | | 2.00% |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | Total | 100.00% |

Schedule constraints

Note: Above items 5 through 7 are on going and costs are to be determined. Breakdown of negotiations with landowners could cause schedule changes and delays. Catastrophic events such as wildfires could cause setbacks in meeting time lines on objectives.

Completion date

2094 or later, ongoing in perpetuity.

Section 5. Budget**FY99 project budget (BPA obligated):*****FY2000 budget by line item***

| Item | Note | % of total | FY2000 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Personnel | See Individual proposals under this section for costs. | %0 | |
| Fringe benefits | | %0 | |
| Supplies, materials, non-expendable property | | %0 | |
| Operations & maintenance | | %0 | |
| Capital acquisitions or improvements (e.g. land, buildings, major equip.) | | %0 | |
| NEPA costs | | %0 | |
| Construction-related support | | %0 | |
| PIT tags | # of tags: | %0 | |
| Travel | | %0 | |
| Indirect costs | | %0 | |
| Subcontractor | | %0 | |
| Other | | %0 | |
| TOTAL BPA FY2000 BUDGET REQUEST | | | \$ 0 |

Cost sharing

| Organization | Item or service provided | % total project cost (incl. BPA) | Amount (\$) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| See Hellsgate O&M Project No. 9204800 for specifics. We receive cost sharing | | %0 | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----|-------------|
| periodically on a project by project basis from agencies such as BIA & NRCS. BIA has the responsibility for major fire control efforts on Hellsgate Project lands | | | |
| | | %0 | |
| | | %0 | |
| | | %0 | |
| Total project cost (including BPA portion) | | | \$ 0 |

Outyear costs

| | FY2001 | FY02 | FY03 | FY04 |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total budget | \$0 | | | |

Section 6. References

| Watershed? | Reference |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | BPA, 1995. Hellsgate Winter Range: Wildlife Project, Final Environmental Assessment, DOE/EA-0940, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | BPA, 1997. Wildlife Mitigation Program, Final Environmental Impact Statement, DOE/EIS-0246, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Creveling, J. and B. Renfrow, 1986. Wildlife Protection, Mitigation and Enhancement Planning for Grand Coulee Dam, Final Report, DOE/BP, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kuehn, D. and M. Berger, 1992. Wildlife Habitat Assessment Chief Joseph Dam Project, Washington Project Report, 1992, DOE/BP-91BP14775, Bonneville Power Administration, Portland, OR. |

PART II - NARRATIVE

Section 7. Abstract

This proposal is the Colville Tribes Umbrella Project, Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Mitigation Project. Our overall project goal is to mitigate for as much of the wildlife losses suffered from Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dam projects as is possible. The Hellsgate Project began in 1993 with the acquisition of 4,814 acres of land. It has grown since then to about 18,512 acres. These lands are being managed to protect, mitigate, and enhance the wildlife habitat values they contain. Habitat and management activities are

being monitored and evaluated to determine the degree those objectives are being met. Acquisition and management rights to additional lands are being pursued to meet our mitigation goal.

Section 8. Project description

a. Technical and/or scientific background

The completion of Grand Coulee Dam in 1940 brought cheap electricity and started the flow of irrigation water to a large portion of the Pacific Northwest. It was heralded as a great day for the area and the country. As with many events, there was a dark side to all of this. It brought to an end a way of life and a culture that had existed continuously in the area for thousands of years. It stopped the movement of salmon to the Upper Columbia. It destroyed critical habitat of deer and other wildlife species that were relied upon for existence by the native peoples. Little thought was given at the time, to how this would affect the survival of the wildlife or the people. In 1980, forty years later, the Northwest Power Act made it possible to at least begin to address the losses to wildlife caused by the construction of Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dams. Over 24,000 acres of critical, low elevation wildlife habitat were lost on the Colville Reservation. This was due to the construction and inundation impact of the Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph hydro-projects (Creveling, J. and B. Renfrow, 1986, and Kuehn, D. and M. Berger, 1992). This project will help mitigate some of those losses. It will provide benefits for the regions wildlife and fisheries far into the future. Key personnel on this project have planned, acquired and are currently managing over 18,500 acres of mitigation lands under the FWP. Management and enhancement activities based on sound ecosystem concepts and adaptive management principals will lead to wildlife habitat improvement and maintenance. The chief constraint will be the amount and timing of funding to carryout planned program activities. Long term protection, management, and enhancement of project lands will provide increased bio-diversity, improve soil, water, and vegetation quality and quantity. Project lands lie within the boundaries of the Colville Indian Reservation both upstream and downstream of Grand Coulee Dam. At present, the project manages a total of 18,512 acres made up of the former W. Kuehne ranch (4,814 acres), H. Kuehne ranch (4,800 acres), the Berg ranch (6,300 acres), the Hinman property (770 acres), the Redford Canyon parcel (221 acres), the Nespelem Bend property (517 acres), the Friedlander parcel (60 acres), and 1,030 acres west of the Hellsgate road in the Sand Hills area of the Hellsgate Reserve. These lands were purchased with BPA funding over a six-year period. The funds were provided by BPA through the Washington Wildlife Coalition Agreement. The Tribes are listed as having two wildlife projects, Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Project #9204800 and the Colville Confederated Tribes Performance Contract #9506700. The Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Project is the parent or umbrella project. The performance contract project was set up to transfer funds and provides crediting to BPA. Future project segments are being and will be proposed those are all part of the Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Umbrella Project. The Hellsgate Winter Range Mitigation Project Programmatic Management Plan, 1993 described the former W. Kuehne land purchase. The Hellsgate Winter Range Mitigation Project Proposed

Mitigation Lands Assessment and HEP Analysis, 1995 described the former H. Kuehne land acquisition. The Berg acquisition was described in the combined HEP report with WDFW titled, Columbia River Wildlife Mitigation Habitat Evaluation procedure Report, January 1997. The Redford Canyon and Nespelem Bend acquisitions are discussed in the draft Hellsgate Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Project HEP Report for New Acquisitions, 1997. The Friedlander parcel, Hinman property, and the Sand Hills property are new acquisitions and a draft HEP report will be available in FY2000. Present Hellsgate Project lands are divided into 12 management units by location and/or similar habitat types. Most of the management units are adjacent to Tribal lands or the Columbia River. Management of project lands follows the Scope of Work (SOW) established in the BPA Contract for the Hellsgate Project. The SOW is developed annually and approved by BPA and the Tribes before implementation. Materials are purchased on an as needed basis. Major purchases of equipment and/or supplies are requested in draft budget for each fiscal year and when approved are sent out for bids prior to purchase. Monitoring of habitats will involve HEP which was developed by the USFWS to document the non-monetary value of fish and wildlife resources (USDOE, 1976). HEP provides information describing the relative value of different areas at the same point in time and can make assumptions about these areas at future points in time (USFWS, 1980). By combining the information, the impact of proposed or anticipated land and water use changes on wildlife can be quantified. HEP is based on ecological principals and the assumption that habitat for selected wildlife species can be described as a numerical value known as a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI). This value is derived from an evaluation of the ability of certain habitat components to supply life requirements of selected species. Evaluation involves using the same components to compare existing habitat conditions with optimum conditions for a selected species (Hays, R.L., C. Summers, and W. Seitz, 1981). Selection of evaluation species was based on loss assessments for Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph Dams (Creveling, J. and B. Renfrow, 1986 and Kuehn, D. and M. Berger, 1992). HEP models were developed for each selected species using different habitat types (Berger, M., 1995 and Ashley, P. and M. Berger, 1997). A HEP study will be conducted every 5-10 years to compare baseline habitat values with current habitat points for each habitat type to note vegetation changes over time with management. Wildlife population trend data will be collected annually and compared with habitat changes on each management unit.

b. Rationale and significance to Regional Programs

The Grand Coulee and Chief Joseph hydroelectric projects destroyed, essentially forever, in excess of 88,000 acres of critical low elevation wildlife habitat. This was largely composed of riverine, island, riparian, shrub-steppe, mixed and conifer habitats. This was habitat, rich in bio-diversity, which supported a large number and abundance of wildlife species.

Existing conditions throughout the region very likely preclude current management entities from ever being able to fully mitigate these losses. This project and other similar ones around the basin provide partial mitigation leading towards the fish and wildlife program goal. This project is and will protect and maintain some of the few remaining

portions of shrub-steppe and upland wildlife habitat that are still in fair to good condition in the region.

Enhancement activities will be necessary on some sites to return them to properly functioning habitat. These activities will be closely scrutinized prior to implementation to help insure success while maintaining cost effectiveness. Passive restoration, “letting nature heal itself”, will be emphasized wherever feasible.

This project is not directly linked to projects being carried out by other entities in the basin. However, it is indirectly linked to other similar projects in the region.

c. Relationships to other projects

This Hellsgate Project is the same as or similar to wildlife mitigation efforts of other Tribal and state agencies in the region.

d. Project history (for ongoing projects)

The Hellsgate Big Game Winter Range Project began in 1993 with an operating budget of \$127,616 to protect 4,814 acres of wildlife habitat on the former W. Kuehne ranch purchase for wildlife mitigation. In 1994, \$2,602,579 was received to protect and manage the existing mitigation lands and acquire additional lands. Options were acquired on an additional 11,000 acres of wildlife habitat. In 1995, \$146,858 was obligated to continue funding the Hellsgate Project. In 1996, and 1997, the Hellsgate Project was funded from the Colville Confederated Tribes Performance Contract # 9506700, which provided for the protection and maintenance of the Hellsgate Project. The total FY 97 and prior year's budget were \$ 2,919,748 and \$250,000 was allocated for O&M in 1998. For FY 99 the Projects were combined and allocated \$350,000. Management activities on the Hellsgate Project follow the “Scope Of Work” (SOW) outlined in the BPA Contracts. Monthly progress reports and an annual Project report are submitted to BPA for each FY as per contract.

e. Proposal objectives

At present the Hellsgate Project protects and manages 18,512 acres of habitat for wildlife. The new acquisitions (1,860 acres) have not been assessed for baseline conditions and cover types. This will occur during FY99. The goals and objectives are detailed in the draft site-specific management plan for project lands. The assessed Habitats within this land base are described as specific vegetative cover types as follows:

Shrub-steppe, a total of 6,264 acres are protected and will be enhanced for shrub-steppe obligate species with sharp-tailed grouse and mule deer the main management species for this cover type. Grasslands, a total of 3,108 acres are protected and will be enhanced for wildlife species using this cover type such as sharp-tailed grouse.

Conifer forest, a total of 2,565 acres are protected and will be enhanced for wildlife species using this cover type such as downy woodpecker and blue grouse.

Agricultural lands, a total of 2,360 acres will be converted back to native habitat types based on soil types. These areas will then be managed for the benefit of wildlife. This includes land enrolled into CRP.

Conifer woodland/Ponderosa pine savanna, a total of 1,365 acres are protected and will be enhanced for mule deer, Lewis woodpecker, and other wildlife species using this cover type.

Riparian, a total of 336 acres will be protected and enhanced for obligate species such as mink and beaver using this cover type.

Rock/shrub-steppe, a total of 220 acres will be protected and enhanced for species such as bobcat using this cover type.

Mixed forest, a total of 208 acres will be protected and enhanced for wildlife species using this cover type.

Deciduous woodland, a total of 75 acres will be protected and enhanced for species using this cover type especially neo-tropical migrant birds.

Shoreline areas, a total of 60 acres will be protected and enhanced for waterfowl species and wading birds using this cover type.

Management actions to protect and enhance these cover types include:

Maintaining boundary fences to prevent livestock trespass.

Removing trespass livestock.

Control and/or eliminate noxious weeds.

Maintain and enhance the desired vegetation for each cover type.

Enhance plant community composition by planting and/or seeding.

Monitor and evaluate habitat responses using HEP, permanent transects and photo points.

Monitor and evaluate population and species response to habitat management and enhancement activities using various sampling procedures.

f. Methods

The Hellsgate Site Specific Management Plan (in draft) describes the methodology for the protection, maintenance, and enhancement for project lands. The plan covers the management activities for each management unit and associated cover types. Monitoring will involve the use of periodic HEP analysis comparisons to baseline data as well as information obtained from permanent transects and photo points. By comparing this data over time management activities can be evaluated against project goals and objectives. Activities proposed and methods used to achieve them will follow those outlined in Hellsgate Winter Range Wildlife Mitigation Project, Final Environmental Assessment, 1995 and Wildlife Mitigation Program, Final EIS, DOE/EIS-0246, 1997. Management will follow the SOW outlined in the yearly in the BPA contract summarized below:

To manage, protect, and enhance wildlife habitats and associated wildlife species using adaptive management based on sound ecosystem techniques and principals. To continue Operation and Maintenance activities on Project lands. To monitor and evaluate over the long term so that Project objectives are being met. To coordinate with BPA and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CCT) when Project activities takes place.

g. Facilities and equipment

The major facilities used by project personnel include an office at the Tribal Fish and Wildlife Department building with suitable workspace and computer. The former Berg ranch house is utilized as a field office for the Wildlife Area Manager. At present the facilities are adequate to support the project needs, however future acquisitions will require an additional storage/field office located on project property. The project when feasible makes use of available surplus equipment from BIA or lease equipment rather than outright purchase. The tractors and equipment are adequate at present, however more habitat acquisition and enhancement efforts may require more equipment to meet

project objectives. Work vehicles are leased through GSA or are acquired as surplus and maintained by the Project.

h. Budget

SEE other project proposals.

Section 9. Key personnel

Steven L. Judd, Senior Wildlife Biologist

Matthew T. Berger, Project Wildlife Biologist

James V. Smith, Wildlife Area Manager (WAM)

The personnel involved with this project meet the educational and experience requirements of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation for these types of positions. The Tribes are the entity charged by law with the responsibility for carrying out these types of activities.

Section 10. Information/technology transfer

Project personnel work in cooperation with other agencies and groups within the region, who contribute to project activities and planning. A citizens advisory group and a technical task team are kept informed of all project activities. Project personnel and other agency personnel have developed HEP models for monitoring and measuring habitats for selected wildlife species. The Project Manager has taught HEP to other agency and Tribal personnel involved with regional wildlife mitigation. Reports, models, methods and plans developed on this Project have been used on other project within the basin to evaluate habitats for mitigation. Project personnel worked with WDFW personnel in developing standards and field methodologies for use on other mitigation projects. This project provides opportunities for information exchanges on species and habitats through management activities with other federal and state agencies. This project participates in cost sharing opportunities with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

Congratulations!